A SHORT
ACCOUNT
AND
CHARACTER
OF
SPAIN.

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A SCOTCH

AND

SPARTAN

CHARACTER.

BRITISH MUSEUM

A SHORT ACCOUNT AND CHARACTER OF SPAIN:

IN

A *LETTER* from an *Engliſh* Gentleman now reſiding at *Madrid*, to his Friend in *London*.

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HAVING, Dear Sir, acquainted you before with my Paſſage from *Plymouth* to *Corunna*, and the Dangers I underwent at Sea, I will ſtill endeavour, as far as it lyes in my power, to ſatisfie your Curioſity, by ſending you the Obſervations I have made on the common way of living at *Madrid*, a City, which tho' it be the Epitome of all *Spain*, yet what paſſes for beſt and moſt polite there, comes ſhort of that which we account moſt ordinary and contemptible in *London*.

To begin with Generals, I muſt acquaint you that the Soil here is nothing but Sand and Flint, and that if it produces any thing, 'tis rather to ſhame the lazineſs of the Inhabitants, than to ſhew its Fertility.

The Waters are more ſandy than the Urine of one troubled with the Gravel, and as they are extream ſoft and light, ſo are they eaſily corrupted; which ſerves for a good Excuſe to us *Engliſh*-men for drinking nothing but Wine. Tho' in truth even that is here ſo exceeding bad, that I cannot ſay, I have taſted one ſingle drop of true *Spaniſh* Wine ſince I have been at *Madrid*, the Vintners here having an Art to make a third ſort of Liquor, by mixing it with ſo much Water, that the ingenious Author of the Viſions of Hell, aſſigns them no other Quarters, than with thoſe the *Spaniards* call *Aguadores*, Water-Bearers. But what diſpleaſes me yet more is, that to put one Glaſs of Wine in my Belly, I muſt draw it out of another, for the Casks here are generally Goats-hides, call'd *Borracha's*; and which are moreover ſo curſedly pitch'd, that at every Gulp I get down, I cannot but think that I have drank out of a Coblers Wax-Tub.

As for River-Waters, I can give no Account of them, here being no other than the River *Mançanares*, that paſſes by *Madrid*, which is nevertheleſs ſcarce any where to be found but in the Songs of the Poets. 'Tis true, the Emperour *Charles* V. caus'd a very large and ſtately Bridge to be built over it, call'd by him,

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la Puente Segoviana (the Bridge of *Segovia*,) which having one day ſhewn to an Ambaſſador, to know what he thought of it, He was anſwer'd, *Menos Puente ô mas aqua*; (leſs of the Bridge, or more Water.) For my part I believe this good Prince contented himſelf to build the Bridge, and left to his Succeſſors the care of bringing a River to it; and, as our common ſaying is, *He made the handle before the Pitcher*; For to find Water there, one muſt dig a Well in it, and therefore 'tis grown into a Proverb, That *Eſta Puente eſpera el Rio como los Judios el Meſſias*; that is, This Bridge waits for the River as the *Jews* do for the *Meſſias*.

As for the other two Elements, they are here altogether ſo blended and confounded, that the *Air* is nothing but *Fire*; and unleſs a Man partake of the Nature of a *Salamander* or a *Pyrauſtus*, he will be ſtifled with drawing Breath. Nothing allays the intemperature of the Air, but a certain Wind call'd *Gallego*, Gallicia-Wind, as miſchievous as the Nation that gives it its Name; and ſo very piercing, that, when it blows, a hole in a Caſement, or a chink in a Door, is ſufficient to ſtrike a Man into a Palſie; and very often from a Neighbouring Brothel, it carries the Pox into a Houſe of Piety. Therefore if a Man comes away from *Spain* with any Spice of that Diſeaſe, he may as well have catch'd it in a Church as in the Stews.

From theſe Irregularities proceed two Cuſtoms which I have taken notice of in the *Habit* and *Gate* of the *Spaniards*. For to guard themſelves againſt the

the *Gallego*, they go as well cloath'd in Summer as in Winter; and at all times have their Jackets quilted, as if they were going to put on Armour. However, I think you will eaſily ſuſpect that 'tis not for that uſe, that they line their Clothes with *Cotton*, but rather to give a commodious ſhelter to the *Piojos* (Lice) which in this Country account themſelves *Cavalleros* and *Hidalgos*, (Noble Knights) as well as the reſt of the *Spaniards*; and to gratifie their Vanity, they court the beſt Companies, and hold the higheſt and moſt conſpicuous Ranks amongſt the Nobility.

The other Cuſtom is, That for fear of exciting the internal natural Heat by that without, they walk with ſo much Gravity, that 'tis hard to determine whether they move or ſtand ſtill. Nay, even when they Dance they preſerve their grave Air to that degree, that their Capers are more like the Curteſies of a Carmelite-Nun, or the Crawling of a Gouty Claret-drinker, than the Riſing of *L'Abbé*.

You will, perhaps, be apt to imagine that they correct here the Defects of the Air by the Perfumes of thoſe famous *Spaniſh* Paſtills. But you are miſtaken, for at *Madrid*, the *Paſtills* of the day are nothing but the *Ordure* of the Night, proceeding from the Filthineſs of Thirty Thouſand profeſs'd Curtezans, and a Hundred thouſand pockified *Cavalleros*, who are the principal Members of this St----te. All *Madrid* is a Common Houſe of Office, and no other Gold-finder to cleanſe it, but the Sun: And if it be true, what ſome Philoſophers of old have imagin'd,

that

that the Stars feed on the Vapours of the Earth, I believe they can fare worſe in no part of the World than here. I have my ſelf had my ſhare at this Banquet, and ſo I may boaſt to have ſit at the Table of the Gods, and to have eaten twice the ſame Meat. 'Tis perhaps an effect of their Pride to think that their moſt naſty Actions (ſuch as other Nations endeavour to conceal) deſerve to be recorded in Story; for they often do their Beaſtlineſs on Paper, as if 'twere a Work worthy to be printed; and to give it the more Reputation, they make it fly about, as born on the Wings of Fame; and which they call a *Flying Dragon.* I ſhould offend your Nice Ears, ſhould I explain my ſelf any farther on this Subject; and I at length begin to perceive my Fault in engaging you in this ſtinking Diſcourſe, before I had cry'd, *Agua và*, Have a care of the Water, as they do here, when they fling out their Naſtineſs at the Windows. 'Tis true, that to wind it at ſo great a diſtance, as is betwixt *Madrid* and *London*, you need to have a very good Noſe. I muſt add, that the *Spaniards* have reaſon to wear their Swords high, leſt at every ſtep they cut off the Heads of a thouſand of theſe ſtinking Muſhrooms that every Night ſtart up in the Streets; nay, which they are not here aſhamed to plant even at noon day. The Women herein forfeit their Modeſty, and the Men their Good Manners. But the former have another proof of their want of Modeſty, and that is, they do not ſcruple to expoſe themſelves naked in the imaginary River *Mançanares*, to all Eyes but thoſe of the Sun. But wherein they think they have no occaſion for Bluſhes, becauſe they conceal their Faces, how-

ever, their Bodies are at every Bodies Devotion; and a Friar may be free to rub down a *Sennora*, without being oblig'd to beg her Pardon next morning at Matines.

I ſhall now proceed to tell you what I have obſerv'd about the Beauty, Temper, and Converſation of the fair Sex. 'Tis ſaid, that moſt Women here beſtow their Favours freely, and without intreaty; and that the moſt reſerv'd will not be angry at being ask'd the Queſtion. When they formerly went vail'd, they appeared to me to be handſom, but ſince by the late King's Command they go barefac'd, I have quite alter'd my Opinion, and I am now apt to think that King's Piety found out this way to moderate, in ſome meaſure, the lewdneſs of this City. 'Tis true, tho' they wear neither Vail nor Mask, yet are their Faces ne're the more to be ſeen, for they are ſo thick cover'd with Paint, that 'tis not in the power of *Nature* to break through it. The Old Women take it as a Favour to be call'd *Putas*, Whores, and the young are no more pleas'd to be accounted *Moçetonas*, Maids, than to be ſo in reality; This Point of Honour being, it ſeems, a Token of their want of Merit and Beauty; And if there be any Maidenheads in Nunneries, they are altogether to be underſtood to be Corporal. In our Country the Ladies will grant Favours upon a Promiſe of Marriage; but here upon the firſt Addreſſes a Man makes to a Woman, he muſt declare his Intentions, which they anſwer accordingly thus, *Si para marido, no, ſi para amancebado, ſi*; If you are for being a Husband, I've nothing to ſay to you, but if you have a mind

to

to be a Gallant, with all my heart. In the Articles of Marriage there are Clauſes, whereby the Women reſerve to themſelves certain Days in the Week, to be wholly at their liberty. In ſhort, if they be honeſt, I muſt needs ſay, they ſeem quite otherwiſe. However, they are conſtantly ſeen at Church; but the up-ſhot of their Devotion, I believe, is to pray for luſty Lovers. Their Confeſſors are very indulgent to that Frailty, and eaſily diſpenſe with them for not keeping *Lent*, to that they may, I ſuppoſe, have the more ſtrength get their livelihoods by Sin. But thoſe Prieſts who excell the reſt in point of ſpiritual Wiſdom, believe that the ſureſt and readieſt way to Heaven, is for them to earn in their Youth by the ſweat of their Bodies, Ten thouſand Crowns for Maſſes to be ſaid after their Deaths for their Souls. Nevertheleſs they expect to be courted for what they themſelves deſire, and think, they deſerve to be honour'd as Phyſicians are, becauſe they are neceſſary. The *Spaniards* have yet a greater reſpect for them upon a higher account, and which is not far remov'd from Adoration; for the moſt jealous and moroſe Husbands, tho' they have ne're ſo evident Proofs of their being Cuckolds, yet will they never dare to complain, but by a third Perſon, and for that purpoſe, make uſe of their Confeſſors; who oftentimes, under pretence of reconciling the contending Parties, make an advantage of their Diviſion. What the Women here call *Chapina's* (ſort of Buskins) may rather be term'd Stilts; for they are ſo very high, that they never pull off their Shooes, but they part with one half of their Perſons; and becauſe thoſe *Chapina's* are enrich'd with Plates of Gold, or Silver, and their Heads bedaub'd with Plaiſter, they reſemble

the

the Statue of *Nebuchadnezar* turn'd upſide down. Bawdy-Houſes here, are not publick places, as in other Countries, for every Body has one at home, were there only the Mother, or the Daughter. And as 'tis a Priviledge of the Nobility to have an Oven, and a Brothel in their own Houſes; ſo the *Spaniards*, who pretend to be all Gentlemen, are very tender of this Prerogative.

Having left thoſe Infamous Places, we ſhall paſs on to others where Sanctity is ſo cheap, that it ſuffices for a Man to be accounted a good Friar, if he be but an *Ignoramus*. As to their Capacities, there are two ſorts of Doctors among them, ſome of which underſtand no *Latin* at all, and others make ſhift to gueſs at it; and 'tis a ſenſible Effect of the Divine Providence, that the Bible was tranſlated into their vulgar Tongue; for had it remain'd in *Hebrew* and *Greek*, the *Spaniards* would have miſtaken it for the *Alcoran*. They never underſtand any Thing well, but one ſingle Thing only; and if Women were Sciences, there wou'd never be Adultery amongſt them.

The generality of the Prieſts are term'd *Licentiado's*, Licentiates, not becauſe they have taken that Degree, but rather, that they were turn'd out of the Univerſitys, as uſeleſs Soldiers are disbanded from an Army: Now as in all other Trades ſeveral Workmen are required to finiſh one piece of Work (there being in this Country four or five ſorts of Taylors employ'd to make up one Suit of Cloaths) ſo, I think, that to make a good and thoroughly exact Confeſſion, a

Man

Man ſhould confeſs to as many Prieſts, as he has committed Sins, their Capacities, as I ſaid before, ſeldom reaching beyond the knowledge of one ſingle Thing. Not but that they themſelves ſometimes commit all the ſeven deadly Sins; but then in this Caſe, 'tis to be hop'd, that God Almighty forgives them, *ſince they know not what they do.*

Next to the Eccleſiaſtical Order, that of the Nobility is the moſt innocent: Their greateſt Vice, 'tis true, is Pride; and indeed, they are ſo very haughty, that if they ſaw a Gentleman in their Wives Arms, they would not exchange a look with him, for fear of being obliged to Salute him. They are ſaid to be very revengeful: Nevertheleſs, their enmity is not irreconcileable; ſince moſt of their Enemies, are their Wives Friends. If they have a Quarrel upon their hands, they generally decide it after a Royal manner, that is to ſay, with the odds of a Hundred to One. And they glory ſo much in taking a Man at a diſadvantage, that in every Street, where a Murder has been committed, they erect a Croſs in form of a Trophy, with this Inſcription, *Aqui matarono un Hombre.* (Here the *Spaniards* have kill'd a Man!) However, 'tis ſaid, that in foreign Countries, They maintain the Character of Valiant Men; But that is, becauſe not knowing the Roads which way to fly from Danger, they are oblig'd to ſtand ſtill, and think they have ſufficiently diſcharg'd their Duty, when they ſuffer themſelves to be beaten in a good poſture. In ſhort, they make a mere ſpeculative Science of the Military Art; and think, that to be accounted Warlike, 'tis enough, that

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their Anceſtors havebeen ſo, and that they poſſeſs their Qualities, by virtue of the ſame Title, as they do their Inheritance.

Thoſe who have a mind to be diverted with an awkard Figure upon a fine Horſe, muſt come to *Madrid*; For were it not for the red and green croſſes on their Cloaks, it were impoſſible to diſtinguiſh a Spaniſh *Cavaliero* from a Cobler.

As to the Third Eſtate, I know no other, except the *Alcahuetes*, Pimps, and the *Terçeros*, Brokers; unleſs you admit of the *Picaro's*, Beggars, every one of which nevertheleſs, accounts himſelf *Hidalgo como el Rey*, as good a Gentleman as the King; Nay, the very Coachmen here, wear Swords in their Boxes, which being in all other Countries a Mark of diſtinction to Nobility and Gentry, here only is a part of their Habit, or rather one of their Members; for I do not believe, that they leave it off even when they go to Bed, *in Puris naturalibus*.

I will not pretend to give my Judgment upon the adminiſtration of Court Affairs; I ſhall only tell you by the by, that if any Thing in this World may be compar'd to the Torments of *Hell*, 'tis the Tediouſneſs of the Miniſters of State; who repay the Attendance of thoſe that ſolicite them for any Thing, with no other ſatisfaction than what *Tantalus* enjoy'd amidſt the Waters. 'Twould be an admirable School for Atheiſts, to wait for Diſpatches upon ſome Principal Secretary of State here; for being in eternal Pain during their endleſs Solicitations, they might

might without difficulty, be afterwards brought to believe the never-ceasing Torments of the damn'd in the other World.

As for their Oeconomy, and Domestick Concerns, the Fathers take no more care to Educate their Children, than the Children do to Honour their Fathers; and this you must know, because they are mere strangers to one another: Likewise, if the Mothers are curious to preserve the Virginity of their Daughters, 'tis as we cry up a choice Commodity, only to enhance its price: Tho' indeed, that Ware cannot be kept long here; For the Naturalists of this Country especially, assure us, that Virgins loose their Maidenheads as soon as they begin to shed their Teeth; and if there happens to be any found of a longer standing, 'tis in the Scabbards of the Knights of *Saint Jago*.

Among these great Disorders, there are also great Virtues. They have an incomparable Zeal to plant the Catholick Religion in those Places where Gold-Mines are found. Their Wisdom is so profound in warlike Enterprizes, that the *Flemings* and *Italians*, under their Dominion, have much ado to put them in execution. If Justice be not duely Administred here, 'tis not for want of Officers, there being more *Alguazils*, Catch-poles, than of any other sort of Inhabitants: But nevertheless, all the Justice they do, is to live by the Iniquity of their Neighbours; their Design being not to reform Abuses, and redress Grievances, but rather to make an advantage of them. And if every *Alguazil* were to hold a Thief by the

Hand, they would be ſo well match'd, that it would not be poſſible to diſtinguiſh one from 'tother. The Badge of Honour theſe Officers of Juſtice bear, is a Staff, call'd *Vara*; which is alſo the Name given to the *Ells* in Shops; thereby to intimate, I ſuppoſe, that Juſtice here, is ſold by falſe meaſure, as well as Cloth.

Every Country has ſomething wonderful in it: In *Spain* I find two things which ſeem to me prodigious, and which I know not how to reconcile. The firſt is, That every Body here being us'd to beg, where are thoſe that give? Whenever you find a Gentleman makes you a Compliment, you muſt expect Begging in the Concluſion; for as in our Tongue all our Letters conclude with *your moſt humble Servant*, ſo the Civilities of a *Spaniard* always end in *Charity*. That which diſtinguiſhes Scoundrels from Gentlemen-Beggars, is, that theſe Demand with more Arrogance, and are unacquainted with returning of Thanks, and think they fully repay what is given them, by taking the pains to reach out their Hands to receive it.

The ſecond, and far greater Wonder is, That in ſo Chriſtian and Catholick a Country, as *Spain* is ſaid to be, there ſhould be but two Feſtivals kept; one of which is *The Comedy*, whither there is not a Chimney-Sweeper, tho' never ſo needy, but will make a ſhift to go. The other is the famous Feaſt of *Bull-Baiting*, to which this whole Nation runs with greater eagerneſs than the *Jews* to the *Paſchal-Lamb*. As for the Feaſts of *Eaſter* and *Chriſtmas*, they

are

are kept here only upon Courteſie and at Diſcretion, it being lawful to work on them, as on any other Worky-day of the Year. This I take to be ſome remains of the little Reſpect their Predeceſſors ſhew'd formerly to the Myſteries of our Religion. 'Tis true that in this matter they have out-done all other Catholick Nations, having retrench'd all uſeleſs Devotions, and brought the *Saints* of Paradiſe to this paſs, that if they would have a Cope or a Lamp in their Churches, they muſt purchaſe it at the expence of a Miracle. Here are abundance of People that make Gatherings *for the Bleſſed Souls in Purgatory*, who, as the Story goes, having gathered ſome few *Reals*, go immediately and drink good Wine cool'd with Ice, which it ſeems they put upon the Dead for Holy-water.

You Wits will be curious to know the Reach of thoſe of *Spain*: And if you think that a Perſon unconcern'd in this matter can be able to judge of it, I will acquaint you that the general Opinion here is, that the *Spaniards* who have moſt *Wit* have no *Soul*; and thoſe who have leaſt of the firſt, make uſe of their ſuperior Part to gratifie the inferior, and of their Reaſon to ſatisfie their Appetite. They have no memory but to remember Injuries; no Underſtanding, but to mind their private Intereſt; no Will but to deſire it. As for Friendſhip, they make a Bank of it, and Stock-job it at *cent. per cent.* The preſent Things are always deareſt to them, eſteeming it Simplicity to buy with ready Money any Thing in Reverſion, no not Heaven it ſelf: and therefore to merit this, they think 'tis enough to give God Almighty fair Promiſes. The ge-

nerality of People here believe that all good Senſe is to be found in the Heads of the *Caſtilians*; but in my Opinion it is, as great Treaſure is expected by the Vulgar from ancient Tombs, yet which when opened yield nothing but Duſt and Bones. To give you an Inſtance of a rare piece of Subtilty and Penetration, I muſt tell you, that being deſir'd by a Friend at *London* to deliver a Pacquet, with a Watch encloſed in it, to one of the King's Secretaries; when I brought it to him, the firſt thing he did, was to clap the Pacquet to his Ear, to know whether I had ſtoln his Watch, ſuppoſing the Chain had been long enough to make it go from *London* to *Madrid*; and having heard no noiſe, he ask'd me, What was become of his Watch? They are ſo ingenious that they carry ſtraw in Sacks, not having been able from the Creation of the World, to learn by experience how to make a Truſs of Straw. They have learnt Architecture from Moles, moſt of their Houſes being of Earth, and like Mole-hills, but one Story high; And in thoſe which are more ſtately, the Mule that carries the Brick, has a greater ſhare in the glory of the Work than the Architect himſelf. Not but they have Materials of all kinds ſufficient to build better, nevertheleſs, as in other Countries Art perfects Nature, here it is quite otherwiſe, for ſhe no ſooner comes under the Workman's hands, but ſhe loſes her very Native Excellencies, and Stones in their Quarries are much better diſpos'd than here in the beſt Chimney-Pieces; as alſo Wood under its Bark has more of beauty, than when it has undergone the utmoſt Art of the Joiner. In a word, They make their Houſes as they ſtamp their Money, wherein the Materials ever exceed the Form.

Liberal Arts alſo are no better practis'd here than the Mechanic, if any Arts the *Spaniards* have can pretend to be Liberal. As for Phyſick, it is altogether Mercenary, inſomuch that the diſpeopling of *Spain* may be rather attributed to *Eſculapius*'s Tribe, than to the baniſhing of the *Moors* and *Jews*. Muſick likewiſe is ſo *liberal*, that the verieſt Varlet that can thrum a Ghittar, tho' never ſo vilely, will expect a Months wages beforehand, and notwithſtanding quit you before half that time is out. Singers indeed have moſt reaſon to be well paid here, becauſe they purchaſe their Voices with the loſs of their Genitals. I ſay nothing of the Apothecaries, becauſe if they are *liberal*, they cannot be ſuppoſed to loſe much.

I would now ſpeak a word or two in favour of *Spaniſh* Vertue, but that is a quality ſo difficult to find out, that it requires more time than I have to ſpend here to do it. 'Tis, nevertheleſs, the common Opinion, that as every Body has a good and bad Angel to attend them, ſo Vertue here is always accompanied by ſome Vice. Temperance never goes without Avarice, Civility without Deſign, nor Devotion without Hypocriſie; Neither can Humility be met with without Treachery. If a *Spaniard* faſts, 'tis rather to gratifie his Covetouſneſs, than out of any Obedience to the Commands of the Church. If he pardons Injuries, 'tis for fear of being beat in offering to revenge them. If he does good, 'tis in order to receive ſome; and if he prays to God, 'tis not ſo much to ask Pardon for his Faults, as an Opportunity to commit more.

If I ſhould ſay that there were no Thieves in *Spain*,

I ſhould have ſome reaſon for't, eſpecially if I were taken right, and that is as there was formerly no Adultery in *Sparta*, becauſe all Conjunctions were allow'd. Here all is good Fiſh that comes to Net, and every one declares his Neighbour his Enemy, that he may have a right to pillage him: And if God Almighty ſav'd the bad Thief, as well as the good; I can't believe, but that the *Spaniards* are in a fair way to Salvation. If any one in *Spain* ſhould affirm, that he had neither a Whore, nor Thief of his Race; he would be preſently taken for a ſtranger, and call'd *Gavacho*. I remember a Fellow here that had the Impudence to tell his Mother ſo. What Raſcal, quoth ſhe, have you the Inſolence to call in queſtion your Parents? They are not accuſtom'd to hang either Thieves or Murtherers here, becauſe if they did, they muſt truſs up Phyſicians too, and then they would be over-run with Inhabitants as much as they now want them. Reſtitution in caſe of Robbery they never dream of, becauſe, believing themſelves all deſcended from Kings, they imagine they may lawfully uſurp ſometimes; or elſe they give for reaſon that they can never take any thing but what is due to their Merit. Or thirdly, becauſe that things are always ſold here three times more than they are worth; they think, if they ſteal two parts, and pay for one, there is a ſufficient Ballance between Buyer and Seller.

I have heard ſeveral devout Sermons here; but not one that inveigh'd againſt Incontinence: For fear, ſay the Prieſts, that it ſhould raiſe a Commotion among the People; who being oblig'd to believe it no mortal Sin, would then think, that God was not forwarder to pardon them for it, than they were to commit it;

as

as they commonly believe. When the Maids hear the fooliſh Virgins in the Goſpel preach'd againſt, they preſently imagine they have that title given them, becauſe they were Virgins; and that they were deſervedly condemn'd for being ſo. 'Tis true, here are but few Magicians and Conjurers, the reaſon, I ſuppoſe, being that the Devil was too cunning to truſt a Spaniard, either upon his Oath, or his Bond. Alſo he could not be ignorant that in *Spain*, Perjury is only puniſh'd by a Mulct of 25 *Reals*, which being once paid, the Officers are *Cavalleros Honrados* as before.

Amidſt ſo many Examples of Human Infirmity, it were very ſtrange if there ſhould not be found one Juſt; and as among the Apoſtles there was one *Judas*, ſo it is probable that among ſo many *Judas*'s there may be one Apoſtle. The Perſons that are commonly pitch'd upon in this Country for Saints, are for the moſt part, Perſecutors as St. *Paul*; Renouncers of God, as St. *Peter*; Uſurers, as St. *Mathew*; or frail Women, as *Mary Magdalen*: or elſe Murtherers are Canoniz'd, as St. *William*; Magicians, as St. *Cyprian*; or Jail-birds, as the good Thief. In a word, there is not one of them, but what has been Converted. No *John* Baptiſts among them, that were ſanctify'd in their Mothers Wombs; becauſe they are generally tainted before they are Born.

Now becauſe I have touch'd at the exceſſive prizes of Things here by the by, I will give you a Liſt of them in particular. You muſt know then, that Water is ſo dear, that it coſts more to waſh a Chamber, than would ſerve to make 4 Porters drunk with Bran-

dy at *London*. Wine here is cheap enough, and all Sobriety depends upon Parcimony. Water and Soupe would be the ſame thing here, if it were not for the Ice that diſtinguiſhes it, which is ſold at a dearer rate at *Madrid*, than either Chryſtal, or *Venice*-Glaſs. Now if the Snow of the *Alpes* had the ſame value ſet upon it as it lies, the Mountain of St. *Godart* would yield more Gold than the Mines of *Potoſi*. Bread would be cheap enough here, if even bad Commodities were ſuffered to be ſo; but tho' the Earth produces good Corn, and the Farmers are tolerably honeſt; yet when it comes to the Bakers, they are ſuch intolerable Rogues, that they make you pay more for mixing it than it would be worth if it were all Corn; and moreover, becauſe they ſell it by the weight, you never have it but half bak'd. Here there are two kinds of *Sins of the Fleſh*, one belongs to the Women, and the other to the Butchers; Inſomuch, that for one Pound of Fleſh, you think you have bought, you ſhall have one quarter Bone, two Ounces falſe weight, two deducted more for the Servants Marketings, which they call here, *Sizar*, and a fourth part for the *Alguazil* that ſees it weighed. Of what remains, make good chear if you can; but expect neither good wild nor tame Fowl in a Place where an Egg coſts more than a Capon is worth. Veniſon you muſt not expect neither, becauſe all the Beaſts here are Domeſtick. For Fiſh, they ſcarce know the Name; and often miſtake Poor-jack, for a Pike. Fruit is generally very ſcarce at *Madrid*, and that which they have comes ſo very far, that tho' it be hardly ripe when gather'd, yet is it generally rotten before it gets to the Market; and

and to have it good, it ought to have been brought away in the Bloſſom.

You'll perhaps expect I ſhould ſay ſomething concerning the Spaniſh Tongue, before I conclude: But the little ſatisfaction I have received here of Things in general, has in a manner ſo far diſguſted me againſt the Language, that I have had no manner of inclination to look into it. What I have obſerv'd, is, That this Tongue ſeems to me, by no means proper to play at Raffle with, and that becauſe there are ſo many *Az* in it. Neither is it fit to make Fricaſſees, by reaſon of the frequent repetition of the termination *Os*; both which, if you ſhould take from it, there would nothing remain but yawning, and Grimace. The Verbs always require the Dative Caſe, which is the only Liberality I have ever remark'd among the Nation. They have no Phraſe to return Thanks, all their Gratitude conſiſting in *Beſo las manos*. But to ſay truth, the *Spaniſh* Language is properly none at all, for if the *Spaniards* were to reſtore to the *Egyptians*, *Grecians*, *Arabians*, *Moors*, *Jews*, *Romans*, *Vandals*, *Huns*, *Goths*, *French*, and laſtly, *Italians* the Words they have taken from them, they muſt of neceſſity remain dumb, unleſs they had the Gift of the Apoſtles, to furniſh them with New.

Thus Sir, I have preſum'd to trouble you with ſuch an Account of *Spain*, as I could haſtily put together; yet which if it ſhould have the good Fortune to prove any ways Diverting, either to you,

or

or your Friends, Let me but know your Commands, and you may expect more, here being sufficient Matter in every Province, nay, almost in every Street, to furnish out Twenty Letters of this kind: But presuming upon your pardon, for my long Epistle, I shall at present conclude,

Dear Sir,

Your most Affectionate,

28 MR 59

Humble Servant

C. T.